

**Amendments to the Claims:**

The following listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

1-3. (Canceled)

4. (Previously Presented) The process according to claim 23, wherein the aluminum source comprises aluminum trihydrate and thermally treated aluminum trihydrate.

5. (Previously Presented) The process according to claim 23, wherein the magnesium source is at least one selected from the group consisting of  $\text{MgO}$ ,  $\text{Mg}(\text{OH})_2$  and  $\text{MgCO}_3$ .

6-8. (Canceled)

9. (Previously Presented) The process according to claim 23, wherein metals or non-metals are fed to the reactor.

10. (Currently Amended) The process according to claim 9, wherein the metals or non-metals are added to ~~an~~the aluminum source-slurry.

11. (Currently Amended) The process according to claim 9, wherein the metals or non-metals are added to ~~a~~the magnesium source-slurry.

12. (Previously Presented) The process according to claim 23, wherein the anionic clay is subjected to an ion-exchange treatment.

13. (Currently Amended) The process according to claim 23, wherein the anionic clay is ion exchanged with pillaring anions ~~such as  $\text{V}_{10}\text{O}_{28}^{6-}$  and  $\text{Mo}_7\text{O}_{24}^{6-}$~~ .

14. (Previously Amended) The process according to claim 23, wherein metals or non-metals are deposited on the anionic clay.

15. (Currently Amended) <sup>preparing</sup> ~~The process for the preparation of~~ a Al-Mg-containing solid solution and/or spinel, comprising <sup>or</sup> ~~subjecting~~ an anionic clay obtained by the process of claim 23 <sup>to</sup> ~~is subjected~~ to a heat-treatment at a temperature between 300 and 1200°C.

16. (Previously Presented) A process for <sup>preparing</sup> ~~the preparation of~~ anionic clays, comprising reacting an aluminum source and a magnesium source in aqueous suspension to obtain an anionic clay, the aluminum source comprising two types of aluminum-containing compounds, wherein one type of aluminum-containing compound is thermally treated aluminum trihydrate.

17. (Previously Presented) The process according to claim 16, wherein the thermally treated aluminum trihydrate is thermally treated gibbsite.

18. (Previously Presented) The process according to claim 16, wherein one of the two types of aluminum-containing compounds is thermally treated gibbsite, and the other one of the two types of aluminum-containing compounds is gibbsite.

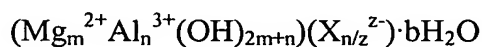
19. (Previously Presented) The process according to claim 16, wherein the reaction takes place at a temperature <sup>of</sup> between 0 and 100°C and at or above atmospheric pressure.

20. (Previously Presented) The process according to claims 19, wherein the reaction takes place at a temperature <sup>of</sup> above 50°C and at or above atmospheric pressure.

21. (Previously Presented) The process according to claim 16, wherein the reaction is conducted at a temperature <sup>of</sup> above 100°C and at a pressure above atmospheric pressure.

22. (Previously Presented) The process according to claim 16, wherein the magnesium source is at least one selected from the group consisting of MgO, Mg(OH)<sub>2</sub> and MgCO<sub>3</sub>.

23. (Currently Amended) A process for <sup>preparing</sup> ~~the preparation of~~ anionic clays corresponding to the general formula



wherein m and n have a value such that  $m/n = 1$  to 10, b has a value in the range of from 0 to 10, and  $\text{X}_{n/z}^{z-}$  may be  $\text{CO}_3^{2-}$ ,  $\text{OH}^-$ , or any other anion present in the interlayers of the anionic clays, <sup>wherein said</sup> ~~which~~ process comprises reacting an aluminum source and a magnesium

source in ~~aqueous~~ aqueous suspension in a reactor at a temperature above 100°C and at a pressure above atmospheric pressure to obtain an anionic clay, the aluminum source comprising two types of aluminum-containing compounds, wherein the first type of aluminum-containing compound is either aluminum trihydrate or its thermally treated form and wherein

(a) when the first type of aluminum-containing compound is aluminum trihydrate, the second type of aluminum-containing compound is selected from the group consisting of aluminum sols, thermally treated aluminum trihydrate, aluminum gels, pseudoboehmite, boehmite, aluminum nitrate, aluminum chloride and aluminum chlorohydrate, and

261 (b) when the first type of aluminum-containing compound is thermally treated aluminum trihydrate, the second type of aluminum-containing compound is selected from the group consisting of ~~other forms of thermally treated aluminum trihydrate~~, aluminum trihydrate, aluminum sols, aluminum gels, pseudoboehmite, boehmite, aluminum nitrate, aluminum chloride and aluminum chlorohydrate.

24. (Previously Presented) The process according to claim 23, wherein the first type of aluminum-containing compound is aluminum trihydrate.

25. (Previously Presented) The process according to claim 23, wherein the first type of aluminum-containing compound is thermally treated aluminum trihydrate.

26. (New) The process according to claim 23, wherein the aluminum source is in the form of ~~an aluminum source~~ slurry.

27. (New) The process according to claim 23, wherein the magnesium source is in the form of ~~a magnesium source~~ slurry.

28. (New) The process according to claim 23, wherein the pillaring anions are at least one of  $V_{10}O_{28}^{6-}$  and  $Mo_7O_{24}^{6-}$ .